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Culture of peace

Promotion and protection of human rights

Letter dated 20 November 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the address of Victor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine, to Ukrainians around the world and the international community regarding the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine, see annex I, as well as the text of the European Parliament resolution on the commemoration of the Holodomor, the Ukraine artificial famine (1932-1933) (see annex II).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annexes could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 45 and 64.

(*Signed*) Yuriy **Sergeyev**
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations

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Annex I to the letter dated 20 November 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Address of the President of Ukraine to Ukrainians throughout the world and the international community on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine

I appeal to you on the occasion of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 — the most tragic event in the history of the Ukrainian people.

The truth about the genocide, intentionally perpetrated by Stalin's regime upon the blessed Ukrainian land, has been seeking to find its way out for decades.

I wish to pay respect to all who were not silent during those years when Ukraine under Soviet rule was immobilized with fear, and the world preferred a state of blissful ignorance about this horrible crime against humanity.

At last, after breaking the chains of communist totalitarianism, independent Ukraine can speak determinedly about this attempt to exterminate the Ukrainian nation in the 1930s.

Today, the truth about the Holodomor is accessible to the international community. No longer can it be kept silent. The darkness of Stalin's 1932-1933 night must succumb to a new dawn.

The Holodomor is recognized as a crime and has been condemned by many states and international organizations, regional governments, parliaments, and city councils all over the world.

We express our deep respect and gratitude for the humanity and solidarity accorded to the memory of the millions of innocent victims of the Holodomor.

International support strengthens our confidence that historical justice will prevail and consolidates our will in that pursuit.

However, the entire global community needs to realize that it will not be possible to prevent crimes against humanity in the future, should those perpetrated in the past not be denounced.

We are not discussing what the world could have done 75 years ago had it been aware of the truth. We are suggesting what the world should do today to honour the memory of those who died and those who managed to survive the Holodomor's hell.

On 22 November 2008 in Kyiv, millions of candles, lit by Ukrainians in memory of their fellow countrymen killed by starvation, will merge with the light of the "Ever-burning Candle" that has travelled through 33 countries and all of Ukraine. It has touched the hearts of honest people in different countries and many nations.

I call upon all who care about compassion and justice, who strive for the victory of good over evil, to light a candle in memory and together with us remember the victims of the Holodomor.

Ukraine remembers — the world acknowledges!

Victor Yushchenko
President of Ukraine

Annex II to the letter dated 20 November 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

European Parliament resolution of 23 October 2008 on the commemoration of the Holodomor, the Ukraine artificial famine (1932-1933)

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the Treaty on European Union,

– having regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,

– having regard to the UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,

– having regard to the Joint Statement issued at the 58th Plenary Session of the UN General Assembly on the 70th Anniversary of the Holodomor in Ukraine, which was supported by 63 States, including all the (then) 25 EU Member States,

– having regard to the Ukrainian Law on the 'Holodomor in Ukraine of 1932-1933', adopted on 28 November 2006,

– having regard to the statement of the President of the European Parliament on 21 November 2007 marking the start of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor famine in Ukraine,

– having regard to the Final Statement and Recommendations of the Tenth Meeting of the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, adopted on 27 February 2008,

– having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are basic principles on which the EU is founded,

B. whereas the UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide criminalises a number of acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group,

C. whereas the Holodomor famine of 1932-1933, which caused the deaths of millions of Ukrainians, was cynically and cruelly planned by Stalin's regime in order to force through the Soviet Union's policy of collectivisation of agriculture against the will of the rural population in Ukraine,

D. whereas the commemoration of crimes against humanity in European history should help to prevent the occurrence of similar crimes in the future,

E. whereas European integration has been based on a readiness to come to terms with the tragic history of the 20th century and a recognition that reconciliation with a difficult history does not denote any sense of collective guilt, but forms a stable basis for the construction of a common European future founded on common values and a shared and interdependent future,

1. Makes the following declaration to the people of Ukraine and in particular to the remaining survivors of the Holodomor and the families and relatives of the victims:

   a) recognises the Holodomor (the artificial famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine) as an appalling crime against the Ukrainian people, and against humanity;

   b) strongly condemns these acts, directed against the Ukrainian peasantry, and marked by mass annihilation and violations of human rights and freedoms;

   c) expresses its sympathy with the Ukrainian people, who suffered in this tragedy, and pays its respects to those who died as a consequence of the artificial famine of 1932-1933;

   d) calls on the countries which emerged following the break-up of the Soviet Union to open up their archives on the Holodomor in Ukraine of 1932-1933 to comprehensive scrutiny so that all the causes and consequences can be revealed and fully investigated;

2. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Government and Parliament of Ukraine, the Secretary-General of the UN, the Secretary-General of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.